

Irrigation

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## IRRIGATION

Management of irrigation water was an individual matter in the early days of Midway, but by 1887 the community had developed to the point that centralized control was necessary.

On May 4, 1887 the first organizational meeting of the Midway Irrigation Company was held with 74 persons present. Alvah J. Alexander was appointed chairman and Attewall Wootton, secretary of the meeting.

At this meeting a motion was carried that a committee of five be elected, who in connection with Attorney William Buys, would draft articles of incorporation, and by-laws to be presented at a meeting called by said committee. Committee members included S. H. Epperson, James B. Wilson, James B. Hamilton, C. I. Bronson and Attewall Wootton.

A second mass meeting was held May 16, 1887 to present the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws as prepared. A committee of five was elected to obtain stock subscriptions and select a time for election of officers. As the articles were read it became necessary to explain them in German to many of those attending, so it was determined to make a complete translation into the German language.

The first meeting of the corporation was held March 16, 1888, and S. H. Epperson was elected president. Directors elected included Mr. Epperson, William J. Andrews, John U. Buhler, Elijah Alder, Charles I. Bronson and B. Mark Smith. Treasurer was William Bonner.

On March 27, 1888 the articles of incorporation and by-laws were read in English and German and then unanimously adopted. Attewall Wootton was appointed secretary at a meeting on March 30, 1888, to serve for a salary of \$100 per year.

While Wilford Van Wagoner was president of the Midway Irrigation Company a law-suit was carried on between the adjacent mining companies and the irrigation company. The case involved the rights of ownership to water originating in mining territory. The suit was finally carried to the Supreme Court of the United States. The Irrigation Company won the suit. A decision was handed down that mining companies could not go into irrigation watersheds and claim the water. They could divert but not develop water. The decision protected agricultural water rights.

Salt Lake City and other government units supported the Irrigation Company in the suit with moral and financial help.

The case attracted national attention. The verdict was hailed as a vital water policy. Mr. Van Wagoner deserves much credit for his valiant, intelligent conduct during the case. The litigation lasted from 1914 when the first complaint was filed until 1925 when it was finally settled.

The annual meetings of the corporation have been held since that time in January. Officers are elected and the annual report is read at this time.

Current officers of the company include Alma Huber, president; William Farrell, Rex Kohler, George Remund, Jay Haueter, J. Fred Price and Vernon Wilson, directors and Grace W. Sonderegger, secretary.